

### Raising Pineapples on the Indian River.

The question of the best methods for making and cultivating a pineapple plantation is one of interest to many of our readers. We have at various times published articles on the subject, one especially good one being written for the Florida Agriculturist, by a grower at White City. We have just found one in the Fort Pierce News, written for that paper by Mr. R. L. Goodwin, a grower of that section.

As in orange culture, so also in the culture of pineapples, there is much difference of opinion as to the best methods. It is probably also true that what is best in one place and on one kind of soil might not be the best for another man only a few miles away.

Mr. Goodwin says:

Along the Indian River lies a stretch of poor, sandy soil, from 20 to 40 feet above the water, about nineteen miles in length and less than a mile in width where grow the Indian River pines. Parallel with the river and close to the bank lies the county road, which runs through the front of the plantations.

The Florida East Coast Railway also runs through the plantations, and the passengers may see an almost unbroken field of pines from Fort Pierce to Waveland and St. Lucie river.

The growth upon the uncleared land is largely spruce pine, but some hickory and oak scrub.

On the river bank is a fine growth of the cabbage palmetto. The spruce land is almost devoid of humus and will grow no other crop than pineapples.

The hickory land will grow oranges fairly well, but pineapples on this soil do best of anything. The land is cleared of trees and brush, then grubbed to a depth of ten inches, carefully raked and the trash and timber burned, care being taken to burn on soil where there is to be nothing planted. The land is staked off in blocks of about 20 rows, 20 to 22 inches apart, leaving an alley of about six feet between blocks. The burning is done in these alleys.

The pineapple is propagated from small plants growing from the stalk that bears the fruit, and are called slips. As the fruit matures, it is surrounded by the slips and is shaded from the hot rays of the sun, largely. When the fruit is gathered, the slips are left on the stalk to mature, and in a few weeks are ready for planting. The slips are then gathered and placed in piles. They are then trimmed by having the butts cut off and a few of the basil leaves torn off exposing the tiny roots.

The pineapple top or crown is also utilized as a plant.

If you examine a pineapple top after being taken from the apple by pulling a few of the bottom leaves away, you will find immature roots like those found in the slip.

The land is then marked off in rows 20x20 or 22x22 inches, and while one man drops the trimmed slips from a basket another man takes a dibble and punches a hole in the sand about two inches deep with one hand, while with the other he puts in the slips as fast as the man can drop them.

A little cottonseed meal and tobacco dust is dropped in the hearts of the plants to prevent the sand from getting in and choking them, and too as a fertilizer.

Two years after planting they bear their first crop, and then every year continuously, indefinitely.

The young plants the first year must have about 500 pounds of fertilizer in the bed three or four times, and must be hoed with a flat bladed implement, called a scuffle hoe, every month during the growing season to break the crust and to form an earth mulch to prevent the rapid evaporation from the soil.

We have constant breezes during the summer and the sandy soil soon dries out.

After the first year blood, bone and potash are broadcast over the plants twice a year; 1,000 to 2,000 pounds per acre at each application. I apply 2,000 pounds after the regular crop is harvested in May, June and July, that analyzes 6 per cent ammonia, 7 per cent phosphoric acid, 8 per cent potash.

In October, after the fall crop is off, I again fertilize with the same weight, but an analysis lower in ammonia and higher in potash.

High grade goods are cheaper and best, I find.

The crop is mainly harvested in May, June and July.

A light crop again in October, with a few scattering crates between seasons.

Negroes work for us ten hours per day. Pickers, who wade through the thick pines and wear canvas leggings and mittens to protect them from the sharp, serrated leaves, get \$1.50 per day. The catcher, who stands in the alley beside a hand-cart, catches the pines as they are thrown to him and placed in the cart; then they are hauled to the packing-house.

I do my own packing, and see that the fruit is handled gently; that it is properly wrapped in paper; that no culls get in the crates with good fruit, and that it is solidly packed. I put my name on my crate to show that I am not ashamed of my goods; and an illustrated label.

I ship to only one firm in a city and have created a demand for my pack.

The crates are oblong, half barrel, and contain 18, 24, 30, 36 and 43 apples.

They are then hauled to cars on siding located one mile apart and shipped to commission men in Northern cities.

An acre yields about 300 crates.

In 1903 my shipments averaged \$1.43 per crate and the Indian River fruit came in direct competition with the Cuban fruit. The Cuban fruit is usually out of the way when we begin to ship, but their crops were late and ours earlier than usual with the biggest crop ever known. This year, to date, I have averaged \$1.63 after freight and commissions were deducted.

The last season I have cared for 11 acres (nine in bearing) with one negro, and an extra man for six days during the rush. After the first year the pines take care of themselves if properly fed.

When the plant fruits it throws out from one to five suckers, some of which bear the next year. In spots plants sometimes die out and are replaced with suckers torn from surrounding plants, and thus the fields are kept up year after year.

The growers find a great deal of leisure time to enjoy life. 10 hours a day, no chores, no stock to attend to, gives plenty of time for sociables, dinners, picnics, launch parties, etc. During the winter months we have little to do on the plantations, and some of us work at our trades. One man who has six acres, works as boat builder at \$3.00 per day; another as carpenter earns the same for about six months in the year. Others who do not care to work away from their place, kill time by hunting and fishing. This would be an ideal occupation for one with a taste for literary or artistic work, as the leisure time could be made profitable by writing, etc.

Land is high in price, and there is not much of the typical pineapple land for sale; \$200.00 per acre for uncleared land. Improved places with dwelling and packing houses can be bought for \$400.00 to \$600.00 per acre. Flat-woods land, however, can be bought for \$10.00. Two crops would pay for a plantation. "Aay drawbacks?" is the question naturally arising in the readers' mind. During the summer months we have mosquitoes in swarms, and protect ourselves accordingly; the houses are all well screened, and we manage to keep them out. In winter there is more or less danger of frosts, but protection can be had for the pines by building sheds of slats two inches apart, as many growers do. In the '94 and '95 freeze growers lost their crop only. The following year the plants had recovered and gave a crop at high

prices. In 1900 a frost visited us, but we got two-thirds of a crop at correspondingly high prices. My net that year was \$2.02 per crate. This is a very prosperous section of Florida; everyone is making money.

I came here, broken in health, from New York, with no knowledge of farming, in '99 with only \$215, and now own two plantations, valued at \$8,000.

The cost of starting a plantation per acre, is as follows:

Cost of land.....	\$200.00
Clearing .....	70.00
12,000 slips at \$6.00 per M .....	72.00
Labor first year.....	25.00
Fertilizer two years .....	60.00
Labor second year .....	25.00

Total .....

Naturally I am a little prejudiced, for here I got away from the "eternal" grind of city life, and found good health, contentment, happiness and prosperity.

### Farm Help.

The Western Fruit Grower is of the opinion that the importation of Chinese and Japanese laborers is the only solution of the labor problem.

The problem of farm help is becoming more serious every year. Good help is so hard to get that many farmers are changing their method of farming, so that less help will be needed in caring for the place. In some parts of the East negroes are being brought from the Southern states to help work the farm, but if these negroes are not different from most of their race who have come North, they will soon begin to leave the farms to work in the cities. The proposition is a very serious one, and many persons suggest as the only remedy, the importation of Chinese and Japanese laborers. And, really, we cannot see how these immigrants could be any more objectionable than thousands of the lower class who have arrived from some of the European countries within the past year. One way to help remedy the evil is to make the farm life so attractive that more of our American boys will be glad to remain on the farm, and this attractiveness will also help to hold the most desirable class of farm help in any community.

E. O. Painter Fertilizer Co.,  
Jacksonville, Fla.:

Gentlemen: The Special Cane fertilizer you sent me last June gave me good results. I am just through grinding cane and making syrup and I can certainly vouch for the best grade of syrup I ever made and know your fertilizer helped considerably to this end.

Yours respectfully,

C. K. McQUARIE.

DeFuniak Springs, Fla., Dec. 21, 1904

E. O. Painter Fertilizer Co.,  
Jacksonville, Fla.,

Will you kindly send me prices of your fertilizers for this year. I have used yours and no others, for the last three years and wish for no better. I wish to get 4 tons for the first application and more in June.

Yours truly, A. W. Hardee.  
Rockledge, Fla., Jan. 16, 1905.

### CHEAP COLUMN

RATES—Twenty words, name and address, one week, 25c.; three weeks, 50c.

WANTED—A tract of ten to twenty thousand acres of cheap land in Florida. State price and location. Prefer location where there are fish and game. M. S. BENN & CO., Dayton, Ohio.

WANTED—Lady or gentleman of fair education to travel for firm of \$250,000 capital. Salary \$1,072 per year, payable weekly. Expenses advanced. Address, GEORGE G. CLOWS, DeLand, Fla.

FOR SALE—Purebred, single comb White Leghorn roosters, \$1.00 f.o.b. G. H. BURRELL, Oxford, Fla.

FOR SALE—Rough Lemons. WILSON & FLYE, Miami, Fla.

ORANGE and grapefruit washing and orange wrapping machines; also swinging bottom pickers' cans and baskets. S. C. WARNER, Palatka, Fla.

FOR SALE AT A BARGAIN, 100 acres rich, productive soil, 35 cleared, fenced and free from stumps; house, barn; near town. W. R. UNDERWOOD, Brooksville, Fla.

PEDIGREE PECAN TREES our specialty. Catalog includes "Guide to Their Successful Culture." Also Fruits, Roses, Ornamentals. Send for it now. GAINESVILLE NURSERY, Gainesville, Fla.

CUT-AWAY HARROWS and repairs. E. S. Hubbard, Agent, Federal Point, Fla.

SALT SICK CURED for \$1.00, or money refunded. W. H. MANN, Interlachen, Fla.

FOR SALE—One 15 h. p. boiler and one 15 h. p. Erie engine. Second hand; recently in use. Condition supposed to be fair, but not guaranteed. Will be sold for almost nothing to make room for other machinery. Speak quick. THE E. O. PAINTER PRINTING CO., DeLand, Fla. tf

WANTED SALESMEN—Salesmen wanted. Three salesmen for our new County, Township and Railroad Survey of Florida. This survey is a splendid compilation of facts, figures and drawings and of wonderful value. Counties and towns fully indexed and population of each are given; railroads plainly shown and distances between all stations are shown; congressional districts outlined, numbered and population given. Other features too numerous to mention. A splendid opportunity for energetic men. RAND, McNALLY & CO., Chicago, Ill.

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